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IRAN: Religious persecutions and issues – Christians and Baha’is in December

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Christians

Christian convert mourns death of mother who pleaded for his release

Article 18 (05.12.2022) – A Christian convert recently

released after nearly five years' imprisonment for "acting against national security" is now mourning the death of his mother.

Nasser Navard Gol-Tapeh, 61, was "pardoned" in October, having been in Tehran's Evin Prison since January 2018.

His mother, Sahab, who was 85 years old, recorded an emotional video for her son's 60th birthday last year, in which she pleaded for Nasser's release, saying he had "done nothing wrong; he only became a Christian".

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Baha'is

Baha'i Mona Ghodrat arrested in Yazd

en-hrana.org – (21.12.2022) – On December 19, 2022, security forces arrested Baha'i Mona Ghodrat in Yazd.

An informed source told HRANA that Ghodrat was arrested in the street and taken to IRGC's detention facility. The agents also searched her home and confiscated some of her belonging.

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Bardia Basiri arrested

Iran Press Watch (19.12.2022) – On December 17, 2022, security forces arrested Bardia Basiri at his home in Tehran. His wife, Ayda Rasti, is also detained. The intelligence agents searched his house and confiscated some of his belongings.

According to HRANA, the news agency of Human Rights Activists, on December 17, 2022, Bardia Basiri was arrested by security forces in Tehran.

An informed source told HRANA that Aida Rasti got a severe nervous attack and was hospitalized when she found out about his husband's arrest.

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Jailed Baha'i couple barred from seeing each other

Iran Press Watch (18.12.2022) – Majid Tavakoli, a well-known student rights activist, was beaten about a month ago while being held in Ward 241 of Evin Prison. News of this beating went viral on social media at the time.

It later emerged that Tavakoli had been beaten and transferred to solitary confinement because of his support for a Baha'i prisoner named Arash Zamani Farahani. Tavakoli had condemned the severe physical mistreatment of Zamani by prison guards.

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Sepehr Ziaei, a Baha'i in Evin, held despite deteriorating health

Iran Press Watch (12.11.2022) – Sepehr Ziaei, a 62-year-old Iranian Baha'i, is one of several Baha'is who have been detained in recent weeks in the country. He has been held in Ward 209 of Evin Prison for more than 77 days. Ziaei has only been allowed one 10-minute meeting with his relatives – and that after waiting more than two months. Iranian authorities have not responded to Ziaei's families concerns over his case or health.

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Baha'i Citizen Farbod Alavi arrested

Iran Press watch (09.12.2022) – On December 4, 2022, security forces arrested Baha'i citizen Farbod Alavi and jailed him in Evin Prison. The agents searched his house and confiscated some of his belongings.

According to HRANA, the news agency of Human Rights Activists, on December 4, 2022, Baha'i Farbod Alavi was arrested at his house in Tehran.

Alavi was allowed to call his family only after three days.

The reason for his arrest and the charges are still unknown.

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Baha'i citizen Vesal Momtazi arrested in Rasht

Iran Press Watch (08.21.2022) – On December 6, security forces arrested Baha'i citizen Vesal Momtazi in Rasht and took him to Lakan Prison.

According to HRANA, the news agency of Human Rights Activists, on Tuesday, December 6, 2022, Baha'i citizen Vesal Momtazi was arrested by security forces.

According to an informed source, the agents searched his house. In recent weeks, he was summoned and interrogated several times.

The reason for his arrest is still unknown.

Iranian Baha'i, father of a four-year-old, languishing in jail

Iran Press Watch (07.12.2022) – Pouya Sarraf, an Iranian Baha'i, aged 33, was arrested in the city of Karaj a month ago, on November 2, and later transferred to a detention facility in Shiraz. Sarraf, who has been held for more than 30 days, was arrested in front of his four-year-old child by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence. His detention comes as

part of an ongoing crackdown on Iranian Baha'is which is unfolding within a larger security sweep which has seen more than 15,000 people arrested in connection with the protests that have raged in Iran since the middle of September.

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Government arrests more Baha'is, again

Iran Press Watch (05.12.2022) – Iranian authorities arrested two members of Iran's long persecuted Baha'i religious minority on Sunday amid an intensified crackdown on the faith group, IranWire can report.

Thirteen Kerman Intelligence Department agents raided the houses of Roha Imani and Firuzeh Sultan Mohammadi and, after searching the houses, arrested both of them and transferred them to an unknown location, sources told IranWire.

Agents also stormed the house of one of Imani's relatives and confiscated their religious books.

Dozens of Baha'i citizens have been detained over the past few weeks in Iran. Among those arrested are Sapehr Ziyai, Payam Vali, Argwan Zabihi, Arash Zamani and Aida Rasti in Tehran, Sanaz Tafzoli in Mashhad, Saman Khadim and Leili Karmi in Shiraz.

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The Islamic Republic's History of massacring Kurdish Baha'is

Iran Press Watch (03.12.2022) – Slaughter has been the Iranian government's only response to protest over the past 43 years. And even as the September 16 death of the 22-year-old woman, Mahsa Amini, at the hands of Islamic Republic forces,

triggered Iran's current and unprecedented nationwide protest against more than four decades of tyranny, so too has the Iranian government again massacred men, women and children to hold on to power.

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House condemns Iranian persecution of Baha'i minority

Iran Press watch (02.12.2022) – Washington, DC – Representatives Gregory W. Meeks, Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and David N. Cicilline, Chair of the Middle East, North Africa and Global Counterterrorism Subcommittee, today issued the following statement regarding a strong 401-18 bipartisan en bloc vote on H.Res. 744, condemning the Iranian regime's persecution of the Baha'i people.

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Mahvash Sabet

Uscirf.gov (02.12.2022) – Mahvash Sabet is imprisoned for her religious belief and activity.

On July 31, 2022, security forces arrested Sabet in Tehran after raiding her home.

In November 2022, it was reported that Sabet was charged with "founding or leading an organization that aims to disrupt national security" (Art. 498 IPC).

In December 2022, it was reported that Sabet was sentenced to ten years in prison following a one hour trial on November 21, 2022.

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Fariba Kamalabadi

Uscirf.gov (02.12.2022) – Fariba Kamalabadi is imprisoned for her religious belief and activity.

On July 31, 2022, security forces arrested Kamalabadi in Tehran after raiding her home.

In December 2022, it was reported that Kamalabadi was sentenced to ten years in prison following a one hour trial on November 21, 2022.

Kamalabadi has previously been imprisoned for her religious leadership role.

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